

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above identified application in view of the preceding amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested. Claims 1-3, 7 and 13-25 are pending in this application.

By this Amendment, Applicants have amended Claim 1. New Claims 20-25 have been added by this amendment. The claim amendments were made to more precisely define the invention in accordance with 35 U.S.C. 112, paragraph 2. These amendments have not been necessitated by the need to distinguish the present invention from any prior art. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been introduced by these amendments, as support therefor is found throughout the specification and drawings.

In the Office Action, Claims 1-3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Press et al. and Sadler et al. but Claim 6 was indicated as allowable subject matter if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In accordance with the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter, Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of original Claim 6. Accordingly, Claim 1 and each of the claims depending therefrom are in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

Applicants have added new Claims 20-25 which are directed to additional patentable aspects of the subject invention.

With regard to Press et al., there is no disclosure of a connector having a cylindrical sleeve with a diametrically increased ring section as required by Claim 20. Moreover, Press et al. do not provide a reason for such a ring section. The Press et al. assembly

merely has discrete spaced apart pin-shaped members. Further, there is no seal disclosed in Press et al., whereas in Claim 20 the seal is part of the connector.

Sadler et al. do not disclose or suggest any need for liquid tight seals let alone show a liquid tight seal as recited in Claim 20. To the contrary, the fins 58, 68 of Sadler et al. are flexible to let liquid moisture leaked from the pipeline escape past them.

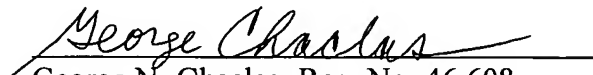
In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that new Claims 20-25 patentably distinguishes over the art of record, and allowance of these claims is respectfully requested.

Any additional fees or overpayments due as a result of filing the present paper may be applied to Deposit Account No. 04-1105. It is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now remaining in this application are in condition for allowance, and such action is earnestly solicited.

If after reviewing this amendment, the Examiner believes that a telephone interview would facilitate the resolution of any remaining matters the undersigned attorney may be contacted at the number set forth herein below.

Respectfully submitted,

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